

January 2021 Issue: Week Four

Getting Off the Merry-Go-Round

As we can see from the responses to our lead-o-meter, many colleagues are experiencing the negative impact of rumination, especially through disrupted sleep and increased levels of stress. However, there's good news: we can get off that Merry-Go-Round!

If you recall in Week Two of this month, we provided a [Self-Assessment Exercise](#) to identify the 'cogs' that keep your rumination going. We also showed an example using anger as the centre cog. Identifying the cogs that continue to churn and turn our emotions and beliefs is an important step in being able to slow or stop the mechanics in our brain. You see, now that we have identified these influencers, we can craft an action plan for each cog to stop our minds from turning. *See the last page for this week's activity!*

Carrying on from last week, here are some more tips for stopping rumination:

Work on Enhancing Your Self-Esteem

Many people who ruminate report difficulties with self-esteem. In fact, a lack

Monthly Breakdown

Week 1

The 'Where': Lead-o-meter

Week 2

The 'What': Self-Assessment Exercise

Week 3

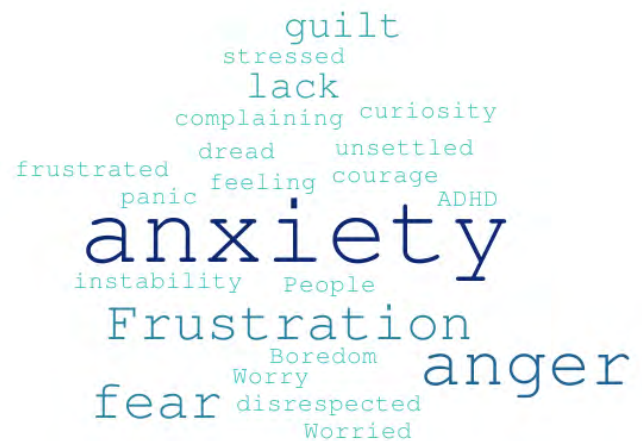
The 'Why': Research, Science and Information

Week 4

The 'How': Building up your skill

[View January Lead-O-Meter Results here!](#)

Q5: What emotion(s) do you feel when you are in that rumination zone?



of self-esteem can be associated with increased rumination as well as increased risk of depression.

You can work on your self-esteem by building on existing strengths that can add to a sense of mastery. You may choose to work on the enhancement of self-esteem in psychotherapy. As you enhance your self-esteem, self-efficacy may also be enhanced, and you may find that you are better able to control rumination.

For more ideas to enhance your self-esteem [check this link](#).

Try meditation

Meditation is a powerful tool for clearing your mind, helping you arrive at a calm emotional state and reducing rumination. When you find yourself with a repeating loop of thoughts in your mind, seek out a quiet space. Sit down, breathe deeply, and focus on nothing but breathing. When thoughts come, acknowledge them without judgement, and let them pass by.

Understand Your Triggers

Each time you find yourself ruminating, make a mental note of the situation you're in. This includes where you are, what time of day it is, who's around you (if anyone), and what you've been doing that day.

Developing ways to avoid or manage these triggers can reduce your rumination. [Here is a downloadable tool you can use to identify your triggers and stressors](#).

Talk to a Friend

Ruminating thoughts can make you feel isolated. Talking about your thoughts with a friend who can offer an outside perspective may help break the cycle.

Be sure to speak with a friend who can give you that fresh perspective, rather than ruminate with you. Be careful that these discussions do not turn into rants!

Try Therapy

If your ruminating thoughts are disrupting your sleep and daily activities, and you are unable to address them on your own, you may want to consider therapy. A therapist can help you identify why you're ruminating and how to address the problems at their core. It can be very hard to get out of rumination on your own. As you may remember from Week One, your brain believes this is how you are supposed to think! Professional help will be well worth the time.

For more information on the types of treatments to consider for ruminating from a clinical perspective, [check out this website](#).

Lifestyle Changes

Finally, you may want to consider overall lifestyle changes if you are a long-time ruminator who wants to bring an end to your repetitive negative thoughts.

Here are some simple changes you can make to your life that can help do just that¹:

- **Be proactive in trying to solve your problems.** First identify problems in your life and then start taking actions to solve your problems — one step at a time.
- **Set your own expectations.** Negative ruminating thoughts can creep in when we question our self-worth. Praise yourself for your successes and forgive yourself for your mistakes. Constantly work on building your self-esteem by taking care of yourself and doing things you enjoy and excel at.

- **Create a support system.** It's so important to have people you can call on for help when something goes wrong or when you're having a bad day. These people could be your friends, family members, a therapist, or anyone who can distract you from your ruminating thoughts. They are also likely to boost your self-esteem.

¹ <https://www.healthline.com/health/how-to-stop-ruminating#tips>

To close our session on rumination, [here is a 5-minute interview](#) with Oprah and author Eckhart Tolle about *How to Silence the*

Voices in Your Head. If you are unfamiliar with Eckhart Tolle and are open to a different perspective in how to calm your mind, I recommend his book: *The Power of Now*. This had an incredible impact on my burnout and mental health as I was eager for new learnings and treatment beyond medication. I downloaded the audio book — Eckhart's soothing voice and repeated core beliefs resonated with me best through my ears. If you try it, please let me know what you think!

Rochelle

Director of Member
Health & Well-Being,
BCPVPA

ACTION PLAN ACTIVITY

How can we stop our cogs from turning? [Click here to download the activity!](#)

Revisit what you wrote for Week Two's [Self-Assessment Exercise](#). On this new cogs worksheet, you will record the same thoughts/beliefs/emotions/behaviours as on your first cogs worksheet. Your two worksheets will now look identical.

Your task for this week is to write down an action for how you can stop each of the small cogs from turning.

EXAMPLE



Adapted from Carol Vivyan, 2015. www.get.gg/docs/Cogs.pdf

This is the final installment in the ReCharge series for the Winter season – thank you for your comments and feedback! We are working on some new health and well-being projects to support our busy members, so watch eNews for updates.



Comments or Suggestions?

We welcome and appreciate your feedback and suggestions! [Fill out our feedback form](#) or contact [Rochelle Morandini](#).

 **bcp
vpa**
bcpvpa.bc.ca/recharge